

The *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium* (www.smarterbalanced.org) is seeking educators to participate in item and task development activities. This invitation describes the opportunity and application process for participation.

The *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium* is developing a system of valid, reliable, and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for grades 3 through 8 and 11. The system will use computer-adaptive testing technologies to the greatest extent possible to provide meaningful feedback and actionable data, which teachers and other educators can use to help students succeed.

Smarter Balanced assessments will go beyond selected-response questions to include constructed-response and technology-enhanced items as well as performance tasks that allow students to demonstrate critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. Performance tasks challenge students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to complex real-world problems. They can best be described as collections of questions and activities that are coherently connected to a single theme or scenario. These activities are meant to measure capacities such as depth of understanding, writing and research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with traditional assessment items.

On behalf of Smarter Balanced, CTB/McGraw-Hill invites qualified educators from Smarter Balanced Governing States to participate in the process of developing items for this assessment system.

CTB/McGraw-Hill, in collaboration with the American Institutes for Research (AIR), Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), and the Council for Aid to Education (CAE), is the Smarter Balanced vendor to support the development of items and tasks for the Smarter Balanced assessment. Over the next eight months, we will be developing items for pilot test administration (to occur in early 2013). We are inviting qualified educators to participate in this item development effort.

Educators will develop approximately 5000 items in English language arts/ literacy and mathematics from grades 3 through 8 and high school. These items will be a combination of selected-response items, constructed-response items, and performance tasks. Many of the items will be designed with technology enhancements. This work will be guided by the Smarter Balanced Content Specifications and Item/Task Specifications <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/> for English language arts/literacy and mathematics.

Participating educators will attend online training sessions and work in small groups to develop items. The small group work will be done remotely via technology interfaces. Assessment specialists from CTB, AIR, DRC, and CAE will facilitate small groups of three to six educators who will focus on a specific grade level and content area as defined by the Content Specifications. Participants will have a specific item-writing assignment that they will be expected to complete during June and July. The assessment specialist will provide ongoing coaching and feedback as participants complete their item-writing assignments and will facilitate peer review sessions within the small groups.

Who is qualified?

Qualified educators will be certified teachers with content degrees in mathematics, ELA, or a closely related field and teaching experience in the grade/content area for which they apply. A detailed list of qualifications is attached.

What is the commitment?

Educators will need to be available for online training during the first two weeks in June and for weekly check-in sessions and small group webinars from June 1 through August 15. We anticipate that educators will spend about 30 working days to complete their item-writing assignment during

this window. Educators will receive a stipend of between \$3500 and \$4500 upon successful completion of their item-writing assignment.

How will participants benefit?

Participants must have expertise and a deep understanding of the CCSS to be eligible for item writing. They will receive training in the Smarter Balanced Content Specifications and item specifications. Benefits will include

- Intensive training on Content and Item/Task Specifications
- Practical training in writing assessment items
- Collegial discussion of assessment targets, evidence, etc.
- Opportunity to support the Consortium activities
- Certificate of participation for local district

Participant Qualifications

Participants will meet the following qualifications.

- Currently certified or licensed to teach ELA and/or mathematics in a K-12 public school.
- Currently teach in a public school located within a Smarter Balanced Governing State.
- Have taught ELA and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and/or high school within the past three years. Second-grade teachers will also be recruited to participate in the development of grade 3 items and/or tasks.
- Have previously reviewed part or all of the Common Core State Standards for the content area in which they are interested in writing items and/or performance tasks.

In addition, all educators who are interested in serving as an item or performance task writer must submit a statement of interest that is at least one paragraph in length and describes (a) the reason(s) for their interest in developing items and/or performance tasks for the Smarter Balanced assessment system and (b) their qualifications for doing so.

Technical Requirements

Participants must have a secure work location where their work will not be observed by others. In addition, participants will need to have the following:

- Email address (organizational or personal). This should be an email address that you will be checking regularly.
- Internet connection to support online meetings such as WebEx (www.webex.com), including local technical support with firewalls or other issues if required.
- Telephone connection to support conference calls to a toll-free number.
- Computer capability to support free Mozilla Firefox browser software (www.mozilla.org).
- Computer capability to support free Adobe Reader software (www.adobe.com).

Online Application Link

<http://ctb.com/smarterbalanced14/itemwriterapplication>